

Welcome
Prelude "Love Has Come" arr. Martha Lynn Thompson
Pages 94-95 Confession
Absolution
Hymn 288 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

(we are seated)

Fourth Sunday in Advent, Lighting the Candle of Love

Advent Wreath Candle lighting Hymn 292 Love Has Come vs 1, 3

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Children's Message

Gospel Acclamation Hymn 295 Of the Father's Love Begotten vs. 1 & 5

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25
Hymn (in middle of gospel) ACS 1027 Don't Be Afraid *(sung twice through)*

Sermon

Hymn God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen *(public domain)*

Nicene Creed
Prayers *(with song Don't Be Afraid)*

Offering / Anthem
8:30 "Lost in the Night" arr. Keith Kolander
10:30 "The Hands That First Held Mary's Child" by Dan Forrest

Page 107-108 Great Thanksgiving
Page 112 The Lord's Prayer

Communion

Page 114 Prayer
Page 115 Blessing

Hymn 271 I Am So Glad

Postlude

Today

+No children's
CONNECT



Merry Christmas! Thank you for your presence with St. Mark's! Today we read about Jesus' birth in Matthew's Christmas story! In the first two chapters of Matthew, so much happens at night: an angel appears to Joseph in a dream, the dark night sky makes the star over Bethlehem visible to the magi, and only a short time later Joseph is visited again in the night by an angel helping him protect his little family. In the quiet of night, in the shadowy parts of our story, and in the mysterious darkness of creation, there is surprising and **amazing grace. Grace and new life are born in the dark.**

December 21 (tonight!) is the winter solstice, the longest night of the year. The early church in the Western hemisphere intentionally aligned its liturgical calendar with the movement of the planet, with the natural rhythms of light and darkness. After tonight, light will slowly creep back into each day, lengthening the daytime by seconds, then minutes, then hours . . . until the summer solstice on June 21, which is near when the church celebrates the feast of John the Baptist (June 24). May you be blessed with God's grace-filled presence in the dark of night and in the light of day!

Prayer Concerns

Shepherd of the Week: Liz Whitlow

St. Mark's Members:

Mary Trimberger, Lorri Monterose, Sharon Gombotz, Bob Anderson, Mike Carter, Ruth Ann Swart, Peter Cuocolo, all who are homebound, all who are caregivers.

St. Mark's Friends & Family: Mike Staley (Tracy Staley's dad), (David Whitlow (son of Liz W), Wendy Phillips (friend of Nina Keck), Sandy Monterose (Tommy's sister), Luz Ortiz (friend of Peter Cuocolo), Adam Mann (son-in-law of Saleebys), Wes and Judy Koch (friends of the Hokes), Brynda Bechtold, Dave & Annette Simpson (friends of Peter Cuocolo), Renee (friend of Cindy Wilkins), Dave (friend of the Greene

Family), Colin Goracke (Jack & Melanie Altman's grandson), Cindy Munsey Hall (friend of Peter Cuocolo), Glen Bannister (Sharon Roy's brother-in-law), Betty Lowe, Sue Wilson (Michelle Corbett's mother), Bleier family, Sandra Davis, Rick Barger (friend of Kathy Jo McLean), Zebulon Hounslea (friend/student of Judy Fletcher), Maria Cuocolo, Ronnie & kids, Emma (15-Hodgkins Lymphoma), Keith LaPrelle (nephew of Karen Pettit), David Moregas (friend of the Kecks), Harriett Hepler (Barbara Overcash's sister), James Nicholson (friend of Peter Cuocolo), Steve Belton (brother of Malinda Little), Tori (friend of Liz McNabb), Anne Monterosso (fiancé of Colin Davis), Marty Rink (friend of the Van Horns), Carol Masters (friend of Liz Whitlow), Pastor David Gerber (Diana Cosme Avery's stepfather), Clark 'Tiger' LeBrun (cousin of Donna Enroth & Linda Melin), Ian Russell

St Mark's Military Members: Tommy Upshaw, Erik Crowder, and Janet Smeltz's grandson- Dalton Leik, Andrew Boman, BK & Laura Barringer's great-grandson- Christopher Barringer.

NEWS & EVENTS

Sunday, December 28

No children connect

One service at 10

+ 10am Worship with Lessons & Carols (livestreamed)

Sunday, January 4

+ 7:30am LMM Breakfast

+ 8:30am Worship

+ 9:30am CONNECT for all ages

+ 9:45am SERVE (4th-6th)

+ 10:30am Worship (livestream)

THE WEEK AHEAD

Wednesday

Christmas Eve services

Thursday

Merry Christmas!

saintmarkslutheran.com

704.664.5474

office@saintmarkslutheran.com

Pastor Dave Keck

dave@saintmarkslutheran.com



GIVING
CODE



Online
Pledge Card



Online Time &
Talent form

Christmas Eve services

4:00pm Children's service

7:30pm Communion & Candlelight traditional service with pre-service music beginning at 7:15pm

10:00pm Carols, Communion, & Candlelight

White Tissue Paper Gifts We are collecting canned goods wrapped in plain white tissue for the 4pm Christmas Eve service. The food will be given to local charities. Please place your donations in the boxes found in the church office hallway and in the narthex.

Food for Days December item of the month: Vienna sausages. Donations can be dropped in the bin near the office hall.

Preschool Registration for 2026-27 is open for church families. To register before the public please contact Stephanie Mattingly at 704-609-6244 or mattinglysk920@gmail.com to secure your spot.

Free Christmas Cards Hands On has received wonderful donations of Christmas cards that can be found in the FLC and Narthex. All cards are free to church members to bless others and brighten someone's holiday! In addition, we will continue to create hand-made cards this season. If you have an interest in making cards or donating supplies, please reach out to Pam Core at 704-340-7883 pjcore@gmail.com or come join us on Tuesdays at 12:30pm!

Annual Chili Cookoff on *Friday, January 23 at 6:00pm* in the FLC. Bring chili to enter the competition or simply come to enjoy a bowl and vote. Prizes will be awarded for: best overall, most creative, and people's choice.

ENJOY (*Empty Nester's Just Older Youth*) Are you between the ages of 45ish and 65? Meet up with us on Friday, January 16 at 6:00pm at Florence Wine and Beer Garden, 518 S Church Street, Mooresville. Contact Kristie Ward with any questions at 704-807-6155 or rkward93@yahoo.com

Break Room If you need to step out of service for a moment away, you are welcome to visit the break room. Follow the signs to the room towards the back of the building.

LYO Assembly 2026: *Keeping Up with the Lutherans: The Church Has Left the Building, February 27–March 1, 2026* in Greensboro. Middle & high schoolers are invited to a weekend of worship, service, and fun exploring how we live our faith beyond the walls of the church. For more information contact Pastor Dave.

Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet on *January 14, 2026 at 11:30 am* at Jeffrey's Steak House at 117 Trade Court, Mooresville, 28115. Please RSVP to susanaltierinc@gmail.com or call 704-929-5648 by Monday, January 12, 2026.